



Florida Health Mission:

To protect, promote
& improve the health
of all people
in Florida through
integrated state, county,
& community efforts.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2015

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Florida Department of Health in Lee County
2015:019

ON-TIME INFANT VACCINES URGED

Sparing preventable illnesses starts with National Infant Immunization Week

Lee County, FL— Decorations adorn the immunizations waiting room of the Florida Department of Health in Lee County, and staff hopes that parents will shrink the increasing rate of vaccine preventable illnesses by bringing their infants in to complete their vaccines on time. National Infant Immunizations Week begins Saturday, April 18 and runs through Saturday, April 25, 2015.

"Immunizations are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools for preventing disease and death," said Kim Wester, DOH-Lee immunizations manager. "They not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious diseases.

Lee County children have nearly twice Florida's average rate of vaccine preventable illnesses. The number of children under 19 years old who caught a vaccine preventable illness has surpassed the state average since 2008. Both are trending higher, but Lee's rate during the majority of the past 20 years was at or below the state average.

"This may be due to incomplete on-time vaccinations, because Lee's school-age children have higher than the state average vaccination rates," said Wester. "Families, healthcare professionals and public health officials must work together to help protect the entire community."

The importance of immunizations has made headlines recently with measles and pertussis outbreaks.

Parents are urged to visit their healthcare professional or DOH-Lee to get their children's vaccines completed on time.

All vaccines for children are free and given without appointments from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 1 to 3:30 p.m. Friday at the DOH-Lee clinic, 3920 Michigan Avenue.

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